

# Second Global COVID-19 Summit

## CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES' COMMITMENTS FOR THE SECOND COVID SUMMIT

MAY 2022

On May 12, 2022, the Biden Administration will co-host the second global COVID-19 Summit, along with Belize, Germany, Indonesia, and Senegal. The first summit, held in September 2021, galvanized support from over 200 stakeholders including governments, civil society, and private sector to develop ambitious targets for ending the pandemic and preparing for the future. The stated key objectives of the second summit are to recommit intensity to the global response, vaccinate the world, protect the most vulnerable, and prevent future catastrophes.

For its part, Catholic Relief Services has made a series of commitments ahead of the Summit to demonstrate our continued commitment to push towards global vaccination goals, while addressing the long-lasting economic and social impacts of COVID-19. As reflected in a summary of these commitments below, CRS holds fast to the Catholic Social Teachings of solidarity and the preferential option for the poor and vulnerable.

### Vaccinate the World

**Getting Shots into Arms** -- Catholic Relief Services commits to work with its in-country teams to increase vaccine coverage and uptake, getting shots into arms and overcoming key barriers, and will uphold the Church's commitment to provide a preferential option to the poor and vulnerable. CRS will continue to build upon current programmatic efforts, directly supporting COVID-19 vaccinations with funded projects in 22 countries and utilizing its broader project base to mobilize at-risk populations in over 100 countries worldwide.

**Working in Partnership** – CRS commits to engaging local partners, faith-based organizations, donors, and governments to facilitate collaboration. As trusted members of the community, local and faith-based partners are uniquely positioned to disseminate essential health information and serve hard-to-reach communities. In recognition of this, CRS commits to directly connect local partners with donors and to manage COVID funding through response mechanisms that channel the bulk of resources directly to local CSOs and FBOs.

**Investing in knowledge-sharing and advocacy** – CRS commits to mobilizing American Catholics, in partnership with Catholic Cares Network and through a network of grassroots groups, to advocate for a comprehensive, equitable global response. CRS commits to advance European and other donor contributions to global vaccine equity through Caritas International. Finally, CRS will contribute the organizations' expertise and capacity to the INGO COVID-19 Vaccine Collaborative (CRS, CARE, IRC, Save the Children, Mercy Corps and World Vision) and share its current activities and up-to-date intel on acute needs of the communities it serves on a public dashboard managed by the Collaborative.

### Save Lives Now

As the global community works toward addressing vaccine equity issues, it is equally important to focus on addressing the primary and secondary health, economic, and social impacts with a particular focus on supporting the families and communities that are already poor and vulnerable.

**Health** - Through its network of over 1500 partners in 100 countries, Catholic Relief Services commits to leveraging its channels for risk communication and community engagement to provide information and alerts aimed at minimizing COVID transmission, illness, and death. CRS will further continue to serve as the Global Fund C19RM lead in Republic of Congo, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and

Sierra Leone. This role includes leading on the procurement of tests and other commodities, as well as operationalizing components of the COVID-19 health response.

**Secondary Impacts** – CRS’ multisectoral platforms are crucial elements to addressing the secondary impacts of the pandemic, which will be long-lasting. CRS commits to using its in-country programs to address the widespread loss of educational gains, support children and families who have lost primary caregivers due to COVID-19, bolster fraying horizontal and vertical social cohesion through a peacebuilding and justice framework, and combat increasing hunger and malnutrition in the countries in which the organization works.

## Build Better Health Security

COVID-19 has increased public awareness around the importance of functioning public health systems, including their infrastructure and workforce needs, creating a unique opportunity to redouble efforts in health systems strengthening and pandemic preparedness.

Catholic Relief Services commits to using its available resources to identify, finance, and fill gaps in health systems in the countries in which it operates. CRS efforts to support strong health systems over the past two years have included implementing activities to address vaccine hesitancy, conducting primary research to inform vaccine strategies, addressing faith-based facilities’ expressed needs to improve adherence to Infection Prevention and Control guidelines, financing critical health workforce trainings, and more.

Beyond just COVID-19, enhanced health care systems are necessary to address other health concerns, which continue to grow around the globe. CRS will continue to work with Ministries of Health and faith-based health service providers to strengthen the capacity of resilient health systems.